Two Papers
OF
PROPOSALS
Concerning the
DISCIPLINE and CEREMONIES
OF THE
CHURCH of ENGLAND.
Humbly Presented to His
MAJESTY,
By the Reverend MINISTERS of the
PRESBYTERIAN PERSWASION.

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The First PAPER.

May it please Your most excellent Majesty,

WE Your Majesties loyal Subjects cannot but acknowledge it as a very great Mercy of God, that immediately after your wonderful and peaceable Restauration unto Your Throne and Government (for which we blesse his Name) he hath stirred up your Royal Heart, as to a *zealous Declaration* against *all Prophaneness* in the People, So to endeavour an *happy composing* of the *Differences*, and healing of the sad *Breaches* which are in the Church. And we shall, according to our bounden duty, become humble Suiters at the Throne of Grace, that the God of Peace who hath put such a thing as this into your Majesties Heart, will, by his heavenly wisdom and Holy Spirit, so assist You therein, and bring your Resolutions to so perfect an effect and issue, that all the people of these Kingdoms may have abundant cause to rise up and bless You, and bless God who hath delighted in You, to make You his Instrument in so happy a Work: That as Your glorious Progenitor, *Henry the Seventh*, was happy in *uniting* the two Houses of *York* and *Lancaster*, and your Grandfather King *James* (of blessed memory) in *uniting* the Kingdoms of *England* and *Scotland*; So this Honour may be reserved to your Majesty (as a radiant Jewel in your Crown) That by your Princely Wisdom and Christian Moderation, the hearts of the People may be *united*, and the unhappy differences and mis-understandings amongst Brethren in matters Ecclesiastical *so composed*, that the Lord may be *One*, and his Name *One* in the midst of your Dominions.

In an humble Conformity to this your Majesties Christian Design, we taking it for granted, that there is a firm Agreement between our Brethren and us in *Doctrinal Truths* of the *Reformed Religion*, and in the *substantial parts* of *Divine Worship*; and that the differences are only in some *various Conceptions* about the *Ancient Form* of *Church Government*, and some particulars about *Liturgie* and *Ceremonies*; do in all humble obedience to your Majesty represent,

First, In as much as the *ultimate end* of Church-Government and Miniſtry, is, *That Holineſs of Life* and the *Salvation of Souls may be effectually promoted*, We humbly deſire in the firſt place, that we may be ſecured of thoſe things in *practice*, of which we ſeem to be agreed in *principles*: As,

1. That thoſe of our Flocks who are diligent and ſerious about the matters of their Salvation, may not by words of ſcorn, or any abuſive uſages, be ſuffered to be reproachfully handled, but may have *Liberty* and *Encouragement* in their Duties, of *exhorting* and *provoking* one another to Love and to Good Works, and of *building up one another in their moſt holy Faith*, and by all religious and peaceable means of furthering one another in the waies of *Eternal Life*; who being not therein oppoſite to Church-Aſſemblies, nor refuſing the guidance and inſpection of their Paſtors, and being reſponſible for what they do or ſay.

2. That each Congregation may have a *Learned*, *Orthodox*, and *Godly Paſtor* reſiding among them, to the end the People may be publickly inſtructed, by *preaching every Lords day*, by *catechiſing* and *frequent adminiſtration* of the *Lords Supper*, and of *Baptiſm*, and other Miniſterial Acts, as the occaſions and neceſſities of the People may require in health and ſikneſs: And that effectual proviſion of Law may be made, that ſuch as are *inſufficient*, *negligent*, or *ſcandalous*, may not be allowed or permitted in ſo ſacred a Function and Imployment.

3. That none may be admited to the Lords Supper, till they can *competently underſtand the Principles of Chriſtian religion*, and do *perſonally own their Baptiſmal Covenant*, by credible profeſſion of *Faith* and *Holineſs*, not contradicting the ſame by a contrary profeſſion, or by a ſcandalous life; and that unto ſuch only *Confirmation* (if continued in the Church) may be adminiſtred. And that the *Approbation* of the *Paſtors*, to whom the catechiſing and inſtructing thoſe under their Charge doth appertain, may be produced before any perſon receive confirmation. Which courſe (we humbly conceive) will much conduce to the quieting thoſe ſad Diſputes which have greatly troubled the Church of God amongſt us, touching Church-Members and Communicants.

4. That an effectual courſe may be taken for the *Sanctification of the Lords day*, appropriating the ſame to holy Exerciſes both in publick and private, without any unneceſſary divertiſments; it being certain and by long experience found, that the due obſervation thereof

thereof is a ſpecial means of preſerving and promoting the power of *Godlineſs*, and obviating of *Prophaneſs*.

Then for matters in difference, viz. Church-Government, Liturgy, *and* Ceremonies, *We humbly Repreſent to Your*

MAJESTY:

That although upon juſt Reaſons, we do diſſent from the Eccleſiaſtical Hierarchy or Prelacy diſclaimed in *Covenant*, as it was ſtated and exerciſed in theſe Kingdomes; yet we do not, nor ever did renounce the true ancient primitive Epiſcopacy, or Preſidency, as it was ballanced or managed by a due commixtion of *Preſbyters* therewith, as a fit means to avoid Corruptions, Partialities, Tyrannies, and other Evils which may be incident to the adminiſtration of one ſingle Perſon: which kinde of attempored *Epiſcopacy*, or *Preſidency*, if it ſhall by your Majeſties grave Wiſdome and gracious Moderation, be in ſuch manner conſtituted (as that the fore-mentioned, and other like Evils, may be certainly prevented) we ſhall humbly ſubmit thereunto. And in order to an happy Accommodation in this weighty Buſineſs, we deſire humbly to offer to your Majeſty ſome of the Particulars, which we conceive were amiſs in the *Epiſcopal-Government*, as it was practiſed before the year, 1640. As,

1. The great extent of the *Biſhops Dioceſs*, which was much too large for his own perſonal Inſpection, wherein he took a perſonal Charge over the Souls of all thoſe within his Biſhoprick; which burden muſt needs be granted to be too heavy for any one man's ſhoulders, the Paſtoral Office being a work of Perſonal Miniſtration and Truſt, and that of the higheſt Concernment to the Souls of the People, for which they are to give an account to Chriſt.

2. That by reaſon of this *diſability* to diſcharge their Duties and Truſts perſonally, the Biſhops did depute the Adminiſtration of much of their Truſt, even in matters of *Spiritual cognizance* to *Commiſſaries*, *Chancellors*, and *Officials*, whereof ſome are Secular perſons, and could not adminiſter that Power which originally pertaineth to the Officers of the Church.

3. That thoſe *Biſhops* who affirm, *The Epiſcopal Office to be a diſtinct Order by Divine Right, from that of the Presbyter*; did aſſume the ſole Power of *Ordination* and *Juriſdiction* to themſelves.

4. That ſome of the *Biſhops* exerciſed an Arbitrary power, as by ſending forth their *Articles* of *Viſitation*, inquiring unwarrantably into

into ſeveral things, and *Swearing* the *Church-wardens* to *Preſent* accordingly; So alſo by many *Innovations* and *Ceremonies* impoſed upon *Miniſters* and *People*, not required by Law.

For the reforming of theſe Evils, we firſt crave leave to offer to your Majeſty:

1. The late moſt Reverend Primate of *Ireland* his *Reduction of Epiſcopacy*, unto the *Form* of a *Synodical Government*, received in the Ancient Church as a Ground-work towards an *Accommodation* and *Fraternal-Agreement*, in this point of *Eccleſiaſtical Government*; which we rather do, not only in regard of his eminent Piety and ſingular Abilities, as in all other parts of Learning, ſo in that eſpecially of the *Antiquities of the Church*; but alſo, becauſe therein *Expedients* are offered towards the *Healing* of theſe *Grievances*.

2. And in order to the ſame End, we further humbly deſire, That the *Suffragans Chorepiſcopi*, mentioned in the Primate's *Reduction*, may be *Choſen* by the *reſpective Synods*, and by *that Election* may be ſufficiently *Authorized* to diſcharge their Truſt, and that the *Aſſociations* may not be ſo Large as to make the *Diſcipline* impoſſible, or to take off the *Miniſters* from the reſt of their neceſſary Work.

3. That no *Oathes*, or *Promiſes* of *Obedience* to the Biſhops, nor any unneceſſary *Subſcriptions* or *Engagements* be made Neceſſary to *Ordination*, *Inſtitution*, or *Induction*, *Miniſtration*, *Communion*, or *Immunities* of Miniſters, they being Reſponſible for any Tranſgreſſion of the Law: And that no Biſhop, nor any Eccleſiaſtical Governor, may at any time *Exerciſe* their *Government* by their *private Will* or *Pleaſure*, but only by ſuch *Rules*, *Canons* and *Conſtitutions*, as ſhall be by *Act of Parliament* ratified and eſtabliſhed: And that ſufficient *Proviſion* may be made to *ſecure* both *Miniſters* and *People* againſt the *Rules* of *Arbitrary Government*.

Secondly, Liturgy.

1. We are ſatisfied in our Judgments concerning the *Lawfulneſs* of a *Liturgy*, or *Form* of *Worſhip*, Provided it be for the *Matter agreeable* to the *Word of God*, and *fitly ſuited* to the *Nature* of the ſeveral *Ordinances* and *Neceſſities* of the *Church*, neither too *tedious* in the whole, nor compoſed of too *ſhort Prayers* or *Reſponſals*, not diſſonant from the *Liturgies* of the *Reformed Churches*; nor too *rigorouſly impoſed*, nor the *Miniſter confined* thereunto, but that he may alſo *make uſe* of the *Gifts* for *Prayer* and *Exhortation* which Chriſt hath given him, for the *Service* and *Edification* of the *Church*.

2. Inaſmuch

2. Inaſmuch as the *Book of Common Prayer* hath in it many things which are *juſtly offenſive*, and need *amendment*, hath been *long diſcontinued*, and very many, both *Miniſters* and *people*, and perſons of *pious*, *loyal*, and *peaceable* Minds, therein greatly diſ-ſatiſfied; whereupon if it ſhould be again *impoſed*, will inevitably follow ſad *Diviſions* and *widening* of the *Breaches* which your *Majeſty* is endeavouring to *heal*: We do moſt humbly offer to your *Maſties Wiſdome*, that for *preventing* of ſo great *Evils*, and for ſetling the Church in *Unity* and *Peace*, ſome Learned, Godly and Moderate Divines of both *Perſwaſions*, indifferently choſen, may be imployed to *Compile* ſuch a *Form* as is before *Deſcribed*, as much as may be in *Scripture-Words*; or at leaſt to *Reviſe* and effectually *Reform* the *Old*, together with an *Addition* or *Inſertion* of other *Varying Forms* in *Scripture-phraſe*, to be uſed at the *Miniſters choice*; of which *Variety* and *Liberty* there be *Inſtances* in the *Book of Common Prayer*.

Thirdly, Concerning Ceremonies.

We humbly Repreſent, That we hold our ſelves obliged in *Every part* of *Divine Worſhip*, to *do All Things Decently*, in *Order*, and to *Edification*, and are willing therein to be *determined* by *Authority* in ſuch things as being meerly *circumſtantial*, are common to *Humane Actions*, and are to be ordered by the *Light of Nature*, and *Humane Prudence*, according to the general *Rules* of the *Word*, which are alwaies to be obſerved.

And as to divers *Ceremonies* formerly retained in the Church of *England*, we do in all humility offer to your Majeſty theſe enſuing Conſiderations.

That the *Worſhip* of God is in it ſelf *Pure*, and *Perfect*, and *Decent*, without having any ſuch *Ceremonies* affixed thereunto; for did they contribute any thing to that neceſſary *Decency* which the Apoſtle requires, we might expect to meet with them in the Apoſtles time, there being no Reaſon to induce us to the uſe of them, which might not have induced them.

That the Lord hath declared Himſelf in the matters that concern his *Worſhip*, to be a *Jealous God*, and this *Worſhip* of His is certainly then moſt pure, and moſt agreeable to the ſimplicity of the Goſpel, and to his *Holy* and *Jealous Eyes*, when it hath leaſt of *Humane admixtures* (in things of themſelves confeſſedly unneceſſary) adjoyned and appropriated thereunto. Upon theſe accounts many faithful Servants of the Lord knowing his *Word* to be a *perfect Rule*, of *Faith* and *Worſhip* (by which they muſt judge of his *acceptance*

rance of their Services, and must be themselves judg'd) have ever been exceeding fearful of *varying* from his *Will*, and of the danger of displeasing him by *additions* or *detractions* in such Duties, wherein they must daily expect the communication of his Grace and comfort; especially in seeing these Ceremonies have been imposed and urged upon such Considerations as draw too near to the significacy and Moral efficacy of Sacraments themselves, that they have together with *Popery* been rejected by many of the *Reformed Churches abroad*; amongst whom, notwithstanding, we doubt not but the Lord is *Worshipped decently, orderly*, and in the *beauty of Holiness*: And ever since the *Reformation* they have been a matter of Contention and endless Dispute in this Church, and have been a cause of depriving the Church of the fruit and benefit they might have reaped from the labors of many learned and godly Divines, some of whom judging them unlawful, others inexpedient, were in Conscience unwilling to be brought under the power of them; And they have occasioned through the *offence* taken at them by many of the people heretofore *great separation* in our Church, and so have rather prejudiced than promoted the *Unity* thereof: And at this time by reason of their long disuse, may be more likely than ever heretofore to produce the same inconvenience. And they are at best *indifferent*, and in their nature *mutable*: And that it is (especially in various Exigencies of the Church) very needful and expedient, that things in themselves mutable, be sometimes *actually changed*, lest they should by *perpetual permanency* and *constant use*, be judged by the people as necessary as the *Substantials* of *Worship* themselves. And though we do most heartily acknowledge your Majesty to be *Custos utriusque Tabulæ*, and to be supream Governor *over all Persons, and in all Things and Causes, as well Ecclesiastical as Civil, in these your Majesties Dominions*; yet we humbly crave leave to beseech your Majesty to consider, Whether, as a Christian Magistrate, you be not as well obliged by that doctrine of the holy Apostle, touching things indifferent, in not occasioning *offence to weak Brethren*, as the Apostle himself (then one of the highest Officers in the Church of Christ) judged himself to be obliged by? and whether the great Work, wherein the Lord hath intrusted your Majesty, be not rather to provide by your sacred Authority, that the things which are necessary by Divine Command in Gods Worship, should be duly performed, than that things unnessary should be made by humane command necessary and penal?

And

And how greatly pleasing will it be to the Lord, that your Majesties heart is so tenderly and religiously compassionate to such of his poor Servants, differing in some matters, who prefer the *peace* of their *Consciences* in God's Worship, above their own *civil concernments* whatsoever.

May it therefore please your Majesty out of your Princely Care for the healing of our Breaches, graciously to grant, That *Kneeling* at the *Lords Supper*, and such *Holy Daies*, as are but of humane Institution, may not be imposed upon such as do conscienciously scruple the observation of them. And that the use of the *Surplice*, and *Cross* in *Baptism*, and *Bowing* at the Name of *Jesus* (rather than Christ or Emmanuel, or any other names whereby the Divine Person, or either of the other Divine Persons is denominated) *may be Abolished*. These things being in the judgment of the Imposers themselves, but *indifferent* and *mutable*; and in the judgment of others, *a Rock of Offence*; and in the judgment of all, *not to be valued with the peace of the Church*. We likewise represent to your Majesty, that divers Ceremonies (which we conceive have no foundation in the Law of the Land) as *erecting Altars*, *Bowing towards them*, and such like, have not only been introduced, but in some places imposed, whereby an *Arbitrary power* was usurped, divers Ministers of the Gospel (though conformable to the established Ceremonies) troubled, some reverend and learned Bishops offended, *Protestants* grieved, and the *Papists* pleased, as hoping these Innovations might make way to greater changes.

May it therefore please your Majesty, in such waies as your Royal Wisdome shall judge meet, effectually to prevent the imposing and using such Innovations for the future; that so according to the pious intention of your Royal Grandfather (King *James* of blessed memory) the publick Worship may be free, not only from *blame*, but from *suspition*.

In obedience to your Majesties Royal Pleasure signified to us, we have tendered to your Sacred Majesty, what we humbly conceive may most conduce to the Glory of God, to the Peace and Reformation of the Church, and to the taking away, not only our *Differences*, but the *roots* and causes of them. We humbly beg your Majesties favourable Acceptance of these our loyal and conciencious Endeavours to serve the Church of Christ; and your Majesties gracious Pardon, if in any *thing* or *expression* we answer not your Majesties expectation; professing before your Majesty,

and before the Lord the Searcher of all hearts, that we have done nothing out of ſtrife and vain-glory, or emulation, but have ſincerely offered what we apprehend moſt ſeaſonable, as conducing to that happy end of *Unity* and *Peace*, which your Majeſty doth ſo piouſly proſecute. We humbly lay our ſelves, and theſe our Addreſſes, at your Majeſties feet; profeſſing our unfeigned Reſolution, to live and die your Majeſties real, faithful, and obedient Subjects: And humbly implore your gracious Majeſty, according to your Princely Wiſdom and Fatherly Compaſſion, to lay your Hands upon the bleeding Rents and Diviſions that are amongſt us, that there may be an healing of them. So ſhall your Throne be greater than the Throne of your Fathers; and in your daies the Righteous ſhall flouriſh, Peace run down like a River, and the Generations to come ſhall call you *Bleſſed*.

The Second PAPER.

May it pleaſe your Majeſty,

SO great was the Comfort created in our mindes by your Majeſties oft expreſſed Reſolution, to become the *Effectual Moderator* in our Differences, and your ſelf to bring us together, by procuring ſuch *mutual condeſcentions* as are neceſſarie thereto; and alſo by your *gracious Acceptance* of our *Propoſals*, which your Majeſty heard and received, not onely without blame, but with *acknowledgement* of their *moderation*; and as ſuch as would infer a Reconciliation between the differing Parties; That we muſt needs ſay, that the leaſt abatement of our hopes is much the more unwelcome and grievous to us, in finding ſo much of the propoſed neceſſarie means for our Agreement (eſpecially in the point of Government) here paſſed by in your Majeſties Declaration, as if it were denied us.

But yet remembring the gracious and encouraging Promiſes of your Majeſtie, and obſerving your Majeſties Clemencie in what is here granted us, and your great Condeſcention in vouchſafing not only ſo graciouſly to hear us in theſe our humble addreſſes and Requeſts, but alſo to grant us the ſight of our Declaration before it is reſolved

reſolved on, with libertie of returning our *Additional Deſires*, and hope that they ſhall not be *rejected*. We reaſſume our confidence, and comfortably expect, that what is not granted us in this *Declaration* that is reaſonable and neceſſary to our *Agreement*, ſhall yet be granted upon fuller conſideration of the *Equity* of our *Requeſts*.

As our deſigns and deſires are not for any worldly Advantages or Dignities to our ſelves, So have we not preſumed to meddle with any Civil Intereſt of your Majeſty, or any of your Officers, nor in matters of meer convenience, to caſt our *Reaſon* into the *ballance* againſt your Majeſties *prudence*, But meerly to ſpeak for the *Laws*, and *Worſhip*, and *Servants* of the Lord, and for the *Peace* of our *Conſciences*, and for the *ſafety* of our own and our Brethrens *Souls*. It lifts us up with joy to think what happy Conſequences will enſue, if your Majeſty ſhall entertain theſe healing motions; How happily our differences will be reconciled, and the exaſperated minds of men compoſed! How temptations to *contention* and *uncharitableneſs* will be removed! How comfortably your Majeſty will reign in the deareſt affections of your Subjects, and how firmly they will adhere to your Intereſt as their own! How chearfully and zealouſly the *united Parts* and *Intereſts* of the Nation will conſpire to ſerve You! What a ſtrength and honour a *Righteous Magiſtracy* a *Learned*, *Loyal*, *Holy Miniſtry*, and a *faithful*, *praying People* will be to your Throne! and how it will be your glory to be King of the *moſt Religious Nation in the World*! that hath no conſiderable parties, but what are centred under *Chriſt* in You. What a *comfort* it will be to the *Biſhops* and *Paſtors* of the Church to be honoured and loved by all the moſt *Religious* of their *Flocks*, to ſee the *ſucceſs* of their *labours*, and the *Beauty* of the *Church* promoted by our *Common Concord*, and Brethren to *aſſemble* and *dwell* together in *unity*, ſerving *one God*, according to *one Rule*, with *one heart* and *mouth*.

And on the contrary, ſhould we loſe the opportunity of our deſired *Reconciliation* and *Union*, it aſtoniſheth us to foreſee what *doleſull effects* our *diviſions* would produce, which we will not ſo much as mention in particular, leſt our words ſhould be miſunderſtood.

And ſeeing all this may be ſafely and eaſily prevented, We humbly beſeech the Lord in mercy to vouchſafe to your Majeſty, an heart to diſcern aright of Time and Judgment.

And as theſe are our general ends and motives, So we are induced to inſiſt upon the Form of a *Synodical Government*, conjunct with a *fixed Preſidency* or *Epiſcopacy*, for theſe *Reaſons*.

1. We have reaſon to believe that no other terms will be ſo generally agreed on, and it is no way injurious to *Epiſcopal Power*, but moſt firmly eſtabliſheth all in it that can pretend to Divine Authority, or true Antiquity: It granteth them much more than Reverend Biſhop *Hall* in his *Peace-maker*, and many others of that judgment do require, who would have accepted of the *fixing* of the *Preſident for Life*, as ſufficient for the *reconciliation* of the *Churches*.

2 It being agreeable to the *Scripture* and the *primitive Government*, is likelieſt to be the way of a more *univerſal Concord*, if ever the Churches on Earth arrive to ſuch a bleſſing: However it will be moſt acceptable to God, and well-informed Conſciences.

3. It will promote the practice of Diſcipline & Godlineſs *without diſorder*, and promote Order without hindering *Diſcipline* & *Godlineſs*.

4. And it is not to be ſilenced (though in ſome reſpects we are loth to mention it) *That it will ſave the Nation from the violation of the Solemn Vow and Covenant, without wronging the Church at all, or breaking any other Oath.* And whether the *Covenant* were lawfully impoſed or not, we are aſſured from the nature of a *Vow to God*, and from the Caſe of *Saul*, *Zedekiah*, and others, that it would be a terrible thing in us to violate it on that pretence. Though we are far from thinking that it obligeth us to any evil, or to go beyond our places & callings to do good, much leſs to reſiſt Authority, (to which it doth oblige us) yet doth it undoubtedly bind us to forbear our own *conſent* to thoſe *luxuriances* of *Church-Government* which we there renounced, and for which no *divine Inſtitution* can be pretended. Not preſuming to meddle with the *Conſciences* of thoſe many of the *Nobility* and *Gentry*, and others, that adhered to this late Majeſty in the late *unhappy Wars*, who at their *Compoſition* took this *Vow* and *Covenant*. We only crave your Majeſties clemency to our ſelves and others, who believe themſelves to be under its obligations. And God forbid that we that are the *Miniſters of the Word of Truth* ſhould do any thing to encourage your Majeſties Subjects to caſt off the *Conſcience of an Oath*. Till the Covenant was decried as *an Almanack out of date*, and its obligation taken to be *null*, that *odious Fact* could never have been perpetrated againſt your Royal Father, nor your Majeſty have been ſo long expulſed from your Dominions. And the obligation of the *Covenant* upon the *conſciences* of the Nation, was not the weakeſt Inſtrument of your *Return*. We therefore humbly beſeech your Majeſty (with greater importunity than we think we ſhould do for our lives) That you would have

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mercy on the Souls and Consciences of your People, and will not suffer us to be tempted to the *violation* of such *solemn Vows*, and this for nothing, when an expedient is before you that will avoid it, without any *detriment* to the Church; nay, to its *honor* & *advancement*.

The *Prelacy* which we disclaim, is, that of *Diocesans* upon the claim of a *superior Order* to a *Presbyter*, assuming the sole power of *Ordination*, and of *publick Admonition of particular Offenders*, enjoyning *Penitence*, *Excommunicating* and *Absolving* (besides *Confirmation*) over so many Churches, as necessitated the *corruption* or *extirpation* of *Discipline*, and the using of *humane Officers* (as *Chancellors*, *Surrogates*, *Officials*, *Commissaries*, *Arch-deacons*) while the *undoubted Officers of Christ* (the Pastors of the Particular Churches) were hindred from the exercise of their Office.

The Restauration of *Discipline* in the particular Churches, and of the Pastors to the *exercise* of their Office therein, and of *Synods* for necessary Consultation and Communion of Churches, and of the *primitive Presidency* or *Episcopacy*, for the avoiding of all shew of *Innovation* and *Disorder*, is that which we humbly offer as the Remedy, Beseeching your Majesty, that if any thing asserted seem unproved, an impartial Conference in your Majesties hearing may be allowed us in order to a just Determination.

Concerning the preamble of your Majesties Declaration, we presume onely to tender these Requests.

1. That we are perswaded it is not in your Majesties thoughts, to intimate that we are guilty of the Offences which your Majesty here reciteth; So we hope it will rather be a Motive to the hastning the Nations Cure, that our unity may prevent Man's temptations of that nature for the time to come.

2. Though we have professed our willingness to submit to the *Primitive Episcopacy* and *Reformed Liturgie*, hoping it may prove an Expedient to an happy Union; yet have we expressed our dislike of the *Prelacy* and present *Liturgie*, while *unreformed*. And though *Sacriledge* and *unjust Alienation* of *Church-lands*, is a thing that we detest, yet whether in some cases of true *Superfluity* of *Revenues*, or true *Necessity* of the *Church*, there may not be an *Alienation* which is no *Sacriledge*? And whether the *Kings* and *Parliaments* have been guilty of this *Crime* that have made some *Alienations*, are Points of high concernment, of which we never had a Call to give our Judgment; And therefore humbly beseech your Majesty

Majesty, that concerning these Matters, we may not to our prejudice be otherwise understood, than as we have before and here expressed.

3. That as your Majesty hath here vouchsafed us your Gracious Acknowledgment of our *Moderation*, it may never be sayd, that a *Minister* and *People* of such *moderate principles*, consenting to *Primitive Episcopacy* and *Liturgy*, could not be received into the *Settlement* and *countenanced Body* of Your *People*, nor possess their *stations* in the Church, and *Liberty* in the Publick Worship of God.

4. And whereas it is expressed by your Majesty, *That the Essence and Foundation of Episcopacy may be preserved, though the Extent of the Jurisdiction may be altered*; This is to us a ground of hope, that seeing the greatning or lessening of *Episcopal power* is in your Majesties judgment but a matter of convenience, the Lord will put it into your heart to make such Alteration in the alterable Points, as the Satisfaction of the Consciences of sober men, and the Healing and Union of the Churches do require.

And as to our Plea for *Primitive Episcopacy*; the Offices and Ordinances of Christ must be still distinguished from the alterable accidents; though we plead not for the *Primitive Poverty, Persecution*, or *Restraints*, yet must we adhere to the *Primitive Order*, and *Worship*, and *Administrations* in the substance, as believing that the circumstantiating of them is much committed unto man, but to Institute the Offices and Ordinances, is the high Prerogative of Christ, the Universal King and Law-giver of the Church.

Concerning the Matter of your Majesties Concessions, as related to our Proposals.

1. We hnmbly renew our Petition to your Majesty for the effectual securing of those premised necessaries, which are the matter of our chiefest care, and whereunto the controverted Points subserve, *Viz.*

1. That private Exercises of Piety may be encouraged.

2. That an able faithful Ministry may be kept up, and the insufficient, negligent, and non-resident and scandalous cast out.

3. That a credible profession of Faith and Obedience be prerequired of Communicants.

4. That the Lords day may be appropriated to holy Exercises, without unnecessary devertisements.

1. *For*

1. *For Church-Government*: In this your Majesties *Declaration*, *Parish-Discipline* is not sufficiently granted us; Inferior Synods with their Presidents are passed by: and the Bishop, which your Majesty here declareth for, is not *Episcopus præses*, but *Episcopus princeps*; endued with sole Power both of Ordination and Jurisdiction: For though it be sayd, *The Bishop shall do nothing without the Advise of the Presbyters*, yet their *Consent* is not made necessary, but he may go contrary to the *Counsel* of them all. And this *Advice* is not to be given by the *Diocesan Synod*, or any other *Representatives* of the *Clergy*, but by the *Dean* and *Chapter*, and so many, and such others as he please to call. In all which there being nothing yeilded us, which is sufficient to the desired *Accommodation* and *Union*; we humbly prosecute our Petition to your Majesty, That the *Primitive presidency*, with their respective *Synods*, described by the late Reverend Primate of *Ireland*, may be the *Form* of *Church-Government* established among us, at least in these three needful Points.

1. That the *Pastors* of the respective Parishes may be allowed not only publickly to *Preach*, but personally to *Catechise*, or otherwise *Instruct* the several *Families* (admitting none to the Lord's Table, that have not personally owned their *Baptismal Covenant*, by a credible profession of Faith and Obedience) and to *Admonish* and *Exhort* the *Scandalous*, in order to their *Repentance*, to hear the *Witnesses* and the *accused party*, and to appoint fit Times, and Places for these Things: And to deny such persons the *Communion of the Church*, and the holy *Eucharist*, that remain Impenitent, or that wilfully refuse to come to their *Pastors* to be *Instructed*, or to Answer such probable *Accusations*, and to continue such *Exclusion* of them till they have made a credible profession of their *Repentance*, and then to receive them again to the *Communion of the Church* Provided there be place for due *Appeals* to *Superior Power*. All this we beseech your Majesty to Express, under your *Fifth Concession*, because it is to us of very great Weight, and the *Rubrick* is unsatisfactory, to which we are referred.

2. That all the Pastors of each *Rural Deanry*, having a stated *President* chosen by themselves (if your Majesty please to grant them that liberty) may meet once a Month, and may receive *Presentments* of all such persons, as notwithstanding *Suspention* from Communion of the Church, continue *impenitent*, and *unreformed*; and having further admonished them, may proceed to the *Sentence* of solemn *Excommunication*, if after due patience they cannot

not prevail: And may receive the *Appeals* of those that conceive themselves injuriously *suspended*, and may decide the Cause. Or (if this cannot be attained) at least, that the Pastors of each *Rural Deanry*, with their *President*, may have power to meet monthly, and receive all such *Presentments* and *Appeals*, and judge whether they are fit to be transmitted to the *Diocesan* or not: And to call before them and admonish the Offenders so *presented*; yet if the *Presentments* against Magistrates and Ministers be resolved only to the *Diocesan Synod*, and their *Appeals* immediately put in, we shall therein submit to your Majesties pleasure.

3. That a *Diocesan Synod*, consisting of the *Delegates* of the several *Rural Synods* be called as often as need requireth; and that without the consent of the major part of them, the *Diocesan* may not ordain or exercise any Spiritual Censures on any of the Ministers, nor Excommunicate any of the people but by the consent of the *Synod*, or of the *Pastors* of the particular *Parishes* where they had Communion. And that not only *Chancellors*, but also *Archdeacons*, *Commissaries* and *Officials* (as such) may pass no Censures purely spiritual, but for the exercise of civil Government, coercively by Mulcts, or corporal Penalties, by power derived from your Majesty, as Supream over Persons and Things Ecclesiastical, we presume not at all to interpose, but shall submit to any that act by your Majesties Commission.

Our Reasons for the first part of Discipline, Viz. *In particular Parishes, are these.*

It is necessary to the honour of the Christian profession, to the integrity of Worship, to the destruction of Impiety and Vice, to the preservation of the Sound, the raising them that are fallen, the comforting of the penitent, the strengthning of the weak, the purity, order, strength and beauty of our Churches, the Unity of Believers, and the pleasing of Christ who hath required it by his Laws: And withall it's agreeable to the ancient Canons and practice of the Churches; and is consented to by our Reverend Brethren, and so is no matter of controversie now between us.

Yet is not the Rubrick Satisfactory to which we are referred.

1. Because it leaves the people at liberty, whether they will let us know of their intention to communicate, till the night or morning before, and alloweth us then only to admonish them; when in great Parishes 'tis impossible for want of time.

2. Because

2. Because it alloweth us to deny the Sacrament to those only that maliciously refuse reconciliation with their Neighbors, and only to admonish other scandalous sinners to forbear; though the Canon forbid us to deliver them the Sacrament.

The Reasons why we insist on the second Proposal, are these:

It being agreed on between us, that the younger, less discreeter sort of Ministers are unfit to pass the sentence of Excommunication without advice and moderation by others; And every Church is not like to be provided with grave, discreet, judicious Guides; the necessity of these frequent lesser Synods for such moderation, and advice, and guidance, will appear by these two general Evidences;

1. It is the very nature and substance of the Office of a Presbyter to have the power of the Keys for binding or loosing, retaining, or remitting sin: which therefore together, or apart, as there is occasion, they are bound to exercise. And this being the Institution of Jesus Christ, cannot be altered by man. In their Ordination, according to the established Order in *England*, it is sayd [*Whose sins thou dost remit they are remitted, whose sins thou dost retain they are retained.*] And they are commanded to minister the Doctrine, Sacraments, and Discipline of Christ as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Realm hath received the same, as expresly as the Bishops are. And as the late Primate of *Ireland* observeth in his Reduction, that they may the better understand what the Lord hath commanded, the Exhortation of S. *Paul* to the Elders of the Church of *Ephesus* is appointed to be read to them at the time of their Ordination: *Take heed to your selves, and to all the Flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you Overseers, to feed* (or rule) *the Congregation of God which he hath purchased with his blood.* And it is apparent in this *Acts* 20.17,18,28. *Act.*14.23. *Act.*15. ---1 *Thes.*5.12,13. 1 *Tim.*3,4,5. 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. *Heb.*13.7, 17, 24. and other places, that it is the Office of a Presbyter to over-see, rule, and guide the Flock with that Ministerial Rule which consisteth in the exercise of the Keys, or management, or personal application of Gods Word to the consciences and cases of particular persons, for their salvation, and order of the Church; the Coercive power belonging to the Magistrate. And this was the practice of the ancient Church, as appeareth undeniably in *Ignatius, Tertullian, Cyprian, Jerome, Chrysostome, &c. Concil. Carthag.* 4 *Can.* 22, 23, 29, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37. And is confessed by the chiefest Defenders of Episcopacy.

H. If all Presentments and Appeals be made to the Bishop and his consistory alone, it will take from us the Parish-Discipline, (which is granted us) and cast almost all Discipline out of the Church; as is most apparent to them, that by experience are acquainted with the quality of our Flocks, and the true nature of the Pastoral work, considering,

1. How many hundred Churches are in a Dioceſs.

2. How many thousand persons are in many Parishes; and of those, what a number are obstinate in wilful gross ignorance or scandal, refusing to be instructed or admonished by their Pastors.

3. How long, and earnestly, and tenderly, sinners must be dealt with, before they are cut off by Solemn Excommunication.

4. How unsatisfactory it must be to the conscience of a Bishop or Synod, to cut off a man as impenitent, upon the bare report of a Minister, before they have upon full admonition proved him impenitent themselves, especially when too many Ministers are (to say nothing of passion that may cause partial accusation) unable so to manage a reproof and exhortation, as is necessary to work on the consciences of the People, and to convict Resisters of flat Impentiencie.

5. What abundance of work the Bishop will have (besides constant preaching, which will require time for preparation) visiting the several Churches, confirming all the souls in so many hundred Parishes (which alone is more than any one man can do aright, if he had nothing else to do) Ordaining, Instituting and Examining the persons so far as to satisfie a tender conscience (that takes not all on trust from others, and is but the executor of others Judgments:) These and much more, with a care of Church-building, Lands, and his own Affairs and Family, and sicknesses, and necessary absence sometimes, will make this great additional work (which must be constantly performed for so many hundred Parishes) to be impossible.

6. Reproofs and suspension will so exasperate the scandalous, that they will vex the Pastors with numerous Appeals.

7. The Pastors will be undone by travelling and waiting, and maintaining such multitude of witnesses, as is necessary for the prosecuting of Presentments, and answering the Many Appeals.

8. The business will be so odious, chargeable and troublesome, that witnesses will not come in.

9. The Minister by these prosecutions and attendances, will be taken off the rest of his ministerial work.

10. Bishops being but men, will be tempted by this intolerable burthen

burthen, to be weary of the work, and ſlubber it over, and caſt it upon others, and to diſcountenance the moſt conſcionable Miniſters that moſt trouble them with preſentments: which when the people perceive, they wil the more inſult, and vex us with Appeals: So that the diſcouragements of the Miniſters, and the utterincapacity of the Biſhops to perform a quarter of this work, will nullifie Diſcipline, as leaving it impoſſible, Experience hath told us this too long.

And then when our Communion is thus polluted with all that are moſt incapable through ignorance, Scandal, and contempt of Piety,

1. Miniſters will be deterred from their Adminiſtrations to ſubjects ſo uncapable.

2. Biſhops that are tender-conſcienced, will be deterred from undertaking ſo impoſſible a work, and of ſo ill ſucceſs.

3. And men that have leaſt tenderneſs of conſcience, and care of ſouls, and fear of Gods diſpleaſure, will ſeek for and intrude into both places.

4. And the tender-conſcienced people will be tempted to ſpeak hardly of ſuch undiſciplin'd Churches, and of the Officers, and to withdraw from them.

5. And hereby they will fall under the diſpleaſure of Superiors, and the ſcorn of the Vulgar, that have no religion, but what is ſubſervient to their fleſh.

6. And ſo whileſt the moſt pious are brought under diſcountenance and reproach, and the moſt impious get the reputation of being moſt regular and obedient to their Rulers; Piety it ſelf will grow into diſeſteem, and impiety eſcape its due diſgrace. And this hath been the cauſe of our Calamities.

II. *As to Liturgie.* It is matter of very great joy and thankfulneſs to us, that we have heard your Majeſtie more than once ſo reſolutely promiſing, that none ſhould ſuffer for not uſing the Common-prayer and Ceremonies; but you would ſecure them from the penalties in the Act for Uniformity, as that which your Declaration at *Breda* intended: And to find here ſo much of your Majeſties Clemencie in your gracious conceſſion for a future Emendation. But we humbly crave leave to acquaint your Majeſtie,

1. That it greives us after all, to hear that it is given in charge by the Judges at the Aſſizes to indite men upon that Act, for not uſing the Common-prayer.

2. That it is not onely ſome obſolete words, and other expreſſions that are offenſive.

3. That many ſcruple, uſing ſome part of the Book as it is, leſt they be guilty of countenancing the whole, yet would uſe it when reformed.

Therefore we humbly crave, that your Majeſty would here declare, that it is your Majeſties pleaſure, that none be puniſhed or troubled for not uſing the Book of Common-prayer, til it be effectually reformed, by Divines of both perſwaſions equally deputed thereunto. And that your Majeſty will procure that moderation in the impoſition hereafter, which we before deſired.

III. *Concerning Ceremonies.* Returning our humble thanks for your Majeſties gracious Conceſſions (of which we are aſſured you will never have cauſe to repent:) We further crave,

1. That your Majeſty will leave out thoſe words in your Declaration, concerning us [That we do not in our Judgments believe the practiſe of thoſe particular Ceremonies which we accept againſt to be in it ſelf unlawful] for we have not ſo declared our Judgments. Indeed, we have ſayd, That treating in order to an happy uniting of our Brethren through the Land; our work is not to ſay, what is our own opinion, or what will ſatisfie us, but what will ſatisfie ſo many as may procure the ſayd Union. And we have ſayd, that ſome think them ſtatly unlawful, ſome but inconvenient; ſome think ſome of them unlawful in themſelves, and others but inconvenient; and while the Impoſer thinks them but indifferent, we conceived they might reaſonably be entreated to let them go, for the ſaving of their Brethrens conſciences, and the Churches peace. We are ſure that a Chriſtians conſcience ſhould be tender of adding to, or diminiſhing from the matter of Gods Worſhip in the ſmalleſt point. The Laws of God being herein the only perfect Rule, *Deut.* 12. 32. And that Synod infallibly guided by the Holy Ghoſt, would lay upon the Churches no other burden but neceſſary things, *Act.* 15. 28. And that for things indifferent, Chriſtians ſhould not deſpiſe or judge each other, *Rom.* 14. Much leſs by ſilencing the able and faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel, to puniſh the Flock even in their Souls, for the tollerable differences and ſuppoſed miſtakes of Miniſters. We doubt not but *Peter* and *Paul* went to Heaven without the Ceremonies in queſtion.

And ſeeing your Majeſty well expreſſeth it [That the Univerſal Church cannot introduce one Ceremony in the worſhip of God that is contrary to Gods Word, expreſſed in the Scriptures.] And multitudes of the Proteſtants at home and abroad do think that all Myſtical

stical, Sacramental Rites of humane Institution, are contrary to the very perfection of Gods Law, and to *Deut.* 12.32. *&c.* (though the determination of meer circumstances necessary *in genere* be not so) and therefore dare not use them for fear of the displeasure of God the Universal Sovereign. It must needs be an expression of your Majesties wisdome, and tenderness of Gods honour, and the safety of your peoples souls, to refuse in things unnecessary to drive men upon apprehended sin, and upon the wrath of God, and the terrors of a condemned conscience.

2. We beseech your Majesty to understand, that it is not our meaning by the word [Abolishing] to crave a prohibition against your own, and other mens liberty in the things in question. But it is a full liberty we desire, such as should be in unnecessary things, and such as will tend to the concord of your people, *Viz.* That there be no Law nor Canon for or against them, commanding, recommending, or prohibiting them; as now there is none for any particular gesture in singing of Psalms, where liberty preserveth an uninterrupted Unity.

For the parti cular Ceremonies.

I. We humbly crave, as to Kneeling, in the Act of receiving the Lords Supper, that your Majesty will declare a Liberty therein, that none shall be troubled for receiving it standing, or sitting. And your Majesties Expressions [upon Reasons best (if not only) known to our selves] commands us to render some of our Reasons.

1. We are sure Christ and his Apostles sinned not, by not receiving it kneeling; and many are not sure, that by kneeling they should not sin: And therefore for the better security, though not for absolute necessity, we crave leave to take the safest side.

2. We are sure that Kneeling in any Adoration at all in any Worship on any Lords day in the year, or any Week day between *Easter* and *Penticost*, was not only dis-used, but forbidden by General Councils, (as *Concil. Nicen.* 1 *Can.* 20. *Concil. Trull. &c.*) and disclaimed by Ancient Writers; and this as a general uncontrolled Tradition: and therefore

that

that Kneeling in the Act of Receiving, is a Novelty contrary to the Decrees and practice of the Church for many hundred years after the Apostles. And if we part with the venerable Examples of all Antiquity, where it agrees with Scripture, (and that for nothing) we shall depart from the Terms which most Moderators think necessary for the reconciling of the Churches; and Novelty is a Dishonor to any part of Religion. And if Antiquity be honorable, the most ancient and neareſt the Legislation and Fountain, must be most honorable: and it is not safe to intimate a Charge of Unreverence upon all the Apostles and primitive Christians, and the universal Church, for so many hundred years together of its pureſt time.

3. Though our meaning be good, it is not good to shew a needless countenance of the practice of Adoring the Bread as God, when it is used by Papists round about us. Sayth Bishop *Hall* in his Life, *p.* 20. *I had a dangerous Conflict with a Sorbonist, who took occasion by our kneeling at the receit of the* Eucharist, *to perswade all the company of our Acknowledgment of a Transubstantiation.*

4. Some of us that could rather kneel than be deprived of the Communion, should yet suffer much before we durst put all others from the Communion that durst not take it kneeling; which therefore we crave that we may not be put upon.

II. We humbly crave also, that the Religious observation of Holy daies of humane Institution, may be declared to be left indifferent, that none be troubled for not observing them.

III. We humbly tender your Majesty our thanks for your gracious Concession of liberty as to the Cross and Surplice, and bowing at the Name *Jesus*, rather than Christ, or God: But we further humbly beseech your Majesty,

1. That this liberty in forbearing the Surplice may extend to Colledges and Cathedrals also, that it drive not thence all those that scruple it, and make those places receptive only for a party. And that the Youth of the Nation may have just liberty as well as the

the Elder. If they be ingaged in the Universities, and their Liberties there cut off in their beginning, they cannot afterwards be free; and many hopeful persons will be else divorted from the Service of the Church.

2. That your Majestie will endeavour the repealing of all Laws and Canons by which these Ceremonies are imposed, that they may be left at full Liberty.

We also tender our thanks to your Majestie for your gracious Concession of the forbearance of the Subscription required by the Canon. But,

1. We humbly acquaint your Majestie, that we do not dissent from the Doctrine of the Church of *England* expressed in the Articles and Homilies; but it is the controverted passages about Government, Liturgie and Ceremonies, and some by-passages and phrases in the Doctrinal part, which are scrupled by those whose liberty is desired. Not that we are against subscribing the proper Rule of our Religion, or any meet Confession of Faith: Nor do we scruple the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy: Nor would we have the door left open for Papists and Heretieks to come in.

2. We take the boldness to say, that since we have had the promises of your gracious indulgence herein, and upon divers Addresses to your Majestie and the Lord Chancellor, had comfortable encouragement to expect our Liberty; yet cannot Ministers procure Institution without renouncing their Ordination by Presbyters, or being re-ordained, nor without Subscription, and the Oath of Canonical Obedience.

3. We must observe with fear and grief, that your Majesties Indulgence and Concession of Liberty in this Declaration, extendeth not either to the abatement of Re-ordination, or of Subscription at Ordination, or the Oath of Obedience to the Bishops.

We therefore humbly and earnestly crave, that your Majesty will declare your pleasure,

1. That Ordination and Institution and Induction, may be conferred without the said Subscription or Oath.

2. That

2. That none be urged to be re-ordained, or denied Institution for want of Ordination by Prelates, that was ordained by Presbyters.

3. That none be judged to have forfeited his Presentation, or Benefice, or be deprived of it, for not reading those Articles of the 39. that contain the controverted points of Government and Ceremonies.

Lastly. We humbly crave, that your Majestie would not onely grant us this liberty, till the next Synod; but will endeavour that the Synod be impartially chosen; and that your Majestie will be pleased to endavour the procurement of such Laws, as shall be necessary for our security till the Synod, and for the ratification of moderate healing Conclusions afterward. And that nothing by meer Canon be imposed on us, without such Statute-Laws of Parliament.

These favours (which will be injurious to none) if your people may obtain of your Majestie, it will revive their hearts to daily and earnest Prayer for your prosperity, and to rejoyce in the thankfull acknowledgement of that gracious providence of Heaven, that hath blessed us in your Restauration, and put it into your heart to heal our breaches, and to have compassion on the faithful people in your Dominions, who do not petition you for liberty to be Schismatical, Factious, Seditious, or abusive to any; but onely for leave to obey the Lord that Created and Redeemed them, according to that Law, by which they must all be shortly judged to everlasting Joy or Misery; and it will excite them to, and unite them in the cheerful service of your Majesty, with their Estates and lives, and to transmit your deserved Praise to Posterity.

FINIS.